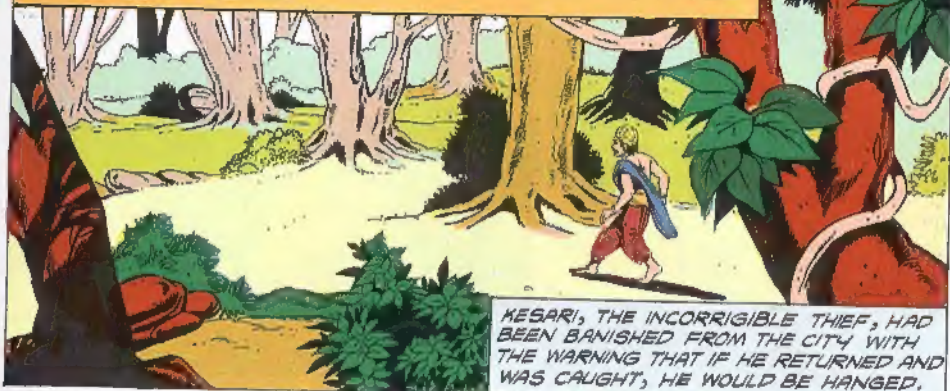




# Kesari the Flying Thief



# KESARI THE FLYING THIEF



KESARI, THE INCORRIGIBLE THIEF, HAD BEEN BANISHED FROM THE CITY WITH THE WARNING THAT IF HE RETURNED AND WAS CAUGHT, HE WOULD BE HANGED.



I DARE NOT GO BACK TO THE CITY. AT LEAST NOT FOR A FEW DAYS! IF THEY CATCH ME...



...I'VE HAD IT. HEY! WHAT'S THAT MAN DOING UP THERE?



COULD THE KING HAVE SENT HIM AFTER ME?



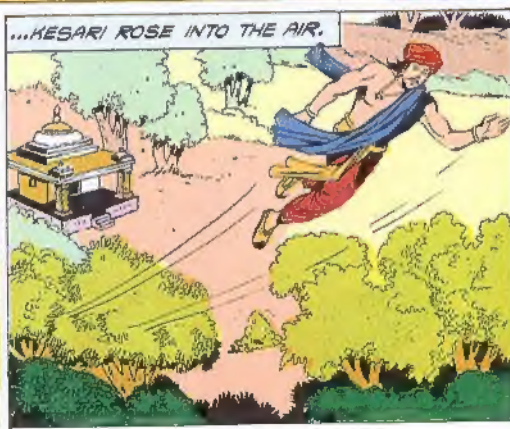
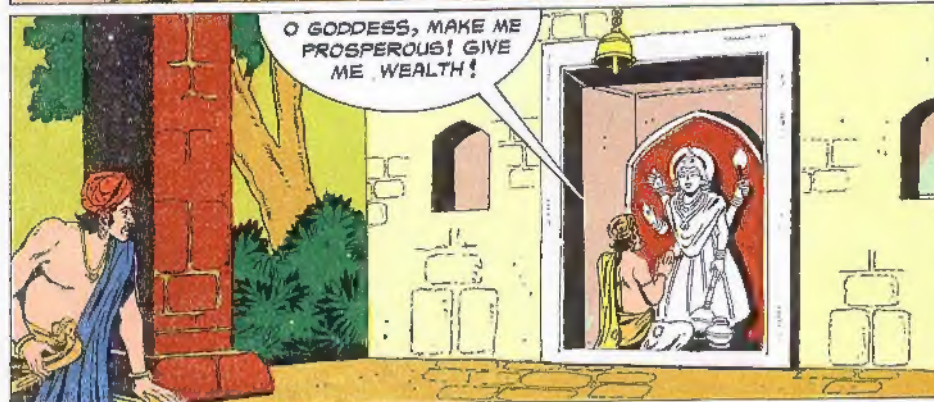
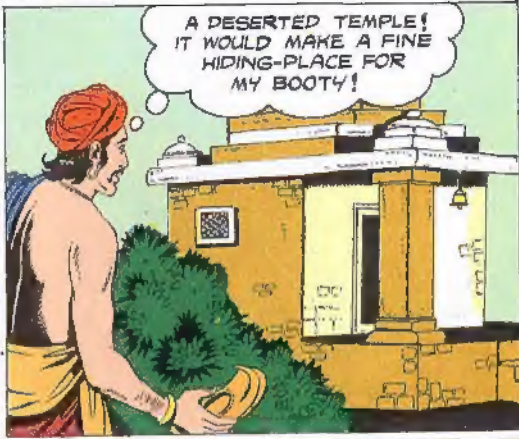
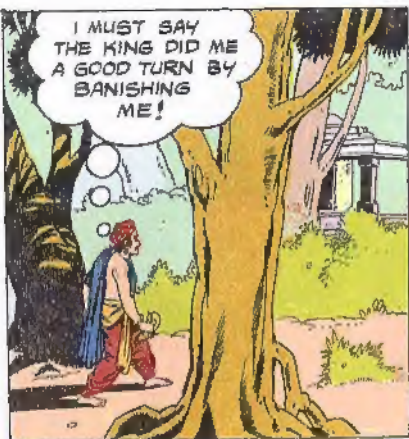
HE'S COMING DOWN!, BUT HOW DID HE GET UP THERE?









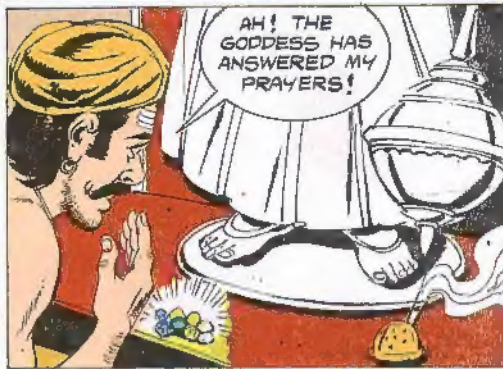
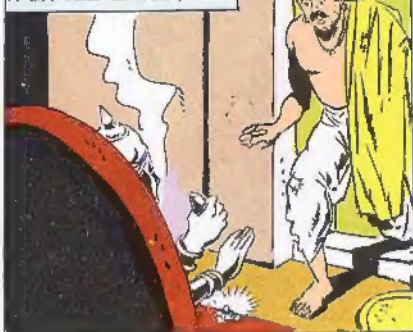


BEFORE DAWN THE NEXT DAY —



AND KESARI LEFT.

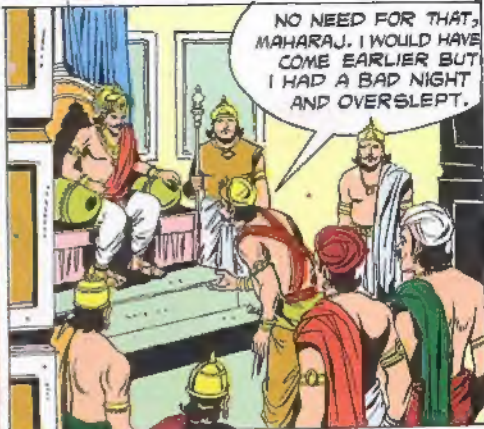
A LITTLE LATER —



MEANWHILE AT THE PALACE —







"I WAS ABOUT TO GRAB HIM WHEN BEFORE MY VERY EYES..."



"...HE ROSE INTO THE AIR..."



BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME, MY FRIEND.

I RAN OUT OF THE SHOP AND TRIED TO CHASE HIM.



"BUT HE HOVERED ABOUT FOR A WHILE, JUST TO TEASE ME..."



"...AND THEN ROSE HIGH INTO THE SKY..."







AND SO THE KING DRESSED HIMSELF LIKE A COMMON SOLDIER AND WITH A SMALL PARTY OF MEN SET OUT IN SEARCH OF THE THIEF.



FOR DAYS THEY SEARCHED EVERY NOOK AND CORNER OF THE CITY BUT IN VAIN.



THEN EARLY ONE MORNING THEY ENTERED THE FOREST.



AFTER THE KING HAD GONE A LITTLE WAY HE DECIDED TO REST FOR A WHILE.

MM-M-M! THE FRAGRANCE OF MUSK AND... SANDALWOOD?



IT'S COMING FROM THAT DIRECTION. THERE MUST BE A TEMPLE SOMEWHERE THERE.



AH! I WAS RIGHT.



THERE'S SOMEBODY WORSHIPPING THE GODDESS!



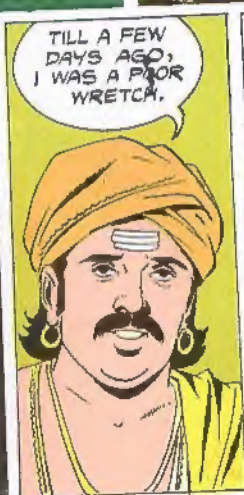
THE MAN'S WORSHIP WAS SOON OVER. AS HE TURNED TO LEAVE—

ARE YOU A PRIEST, MY GOOD MAN?

I AM A MERCHANT BY PROFESSION.



TILL A FEW DAYS AGO, I WAS A POOR WRETCH.



AND THEN THE GODDESS ANSWERED MY PRAYERS WITH A HEAP OF GEMS.

GEMS!



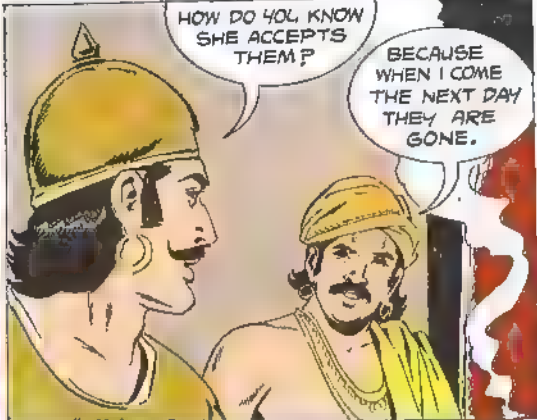


NOW IN MY GRATITUDE I COME TO WORSHIP HER EVERY MORNING AND LEAVE OFFERINGS OF FOOD FOR HER WHICH SHE HONOURS ME BY ACCEPTING.



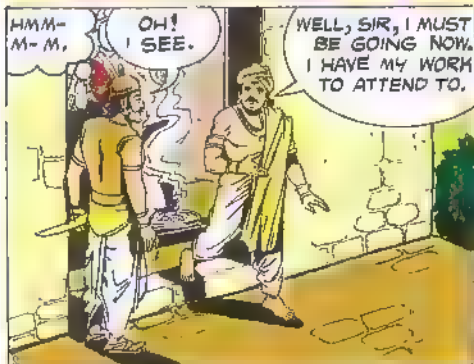
HOW DO YOU KNOW SHE ACCEPTS THEM?

BECAUSE WHEN I COME THE NEXT DAY THEY ARE GONE.



HMM-M-M. OH! I SEE.

WELL, SIR, I MUST BE GOING NOW. I HAVE MY WORK TO ATTEND TO.

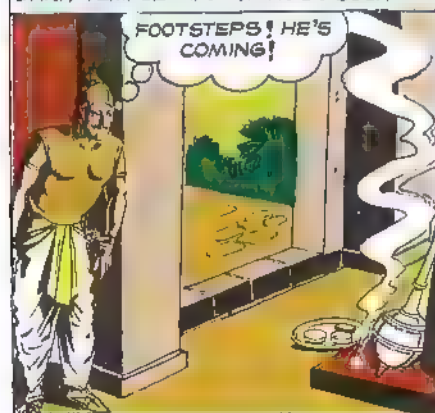


THANKS TO YOU, MY GOOD MAN, I DON'T THINK I'LL NEED TO SEARCH ANY MORE. I THINK I'VE FOUND MY THIEF.



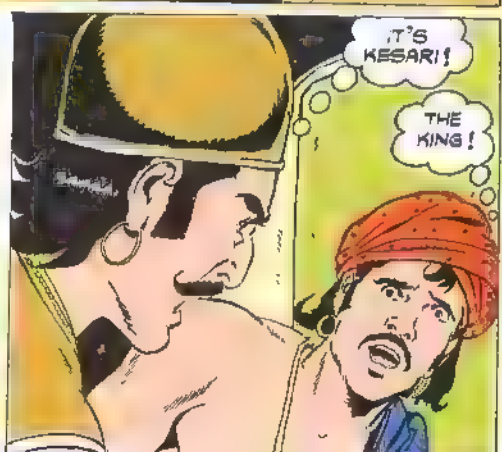
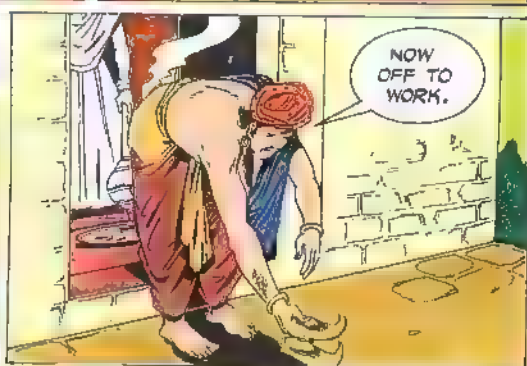
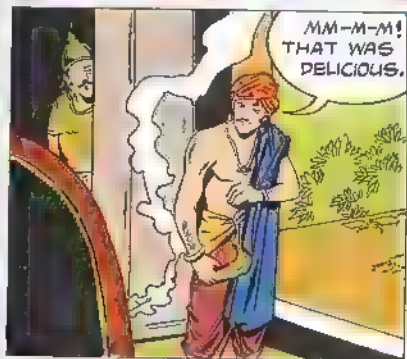
AND THE KING HID HIMSELF INSIDE THE DARK TEMPLE AND WAITED. SOON—

FOOTSTEPS! HE'S COMING!



I'LL GRAB HIM AS HE GOES OUT.



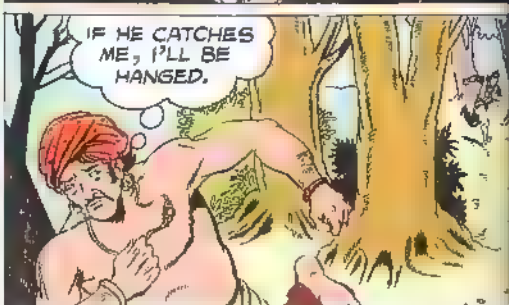
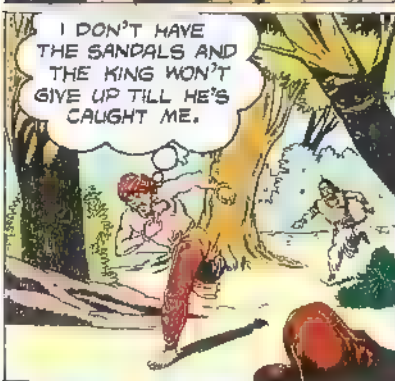
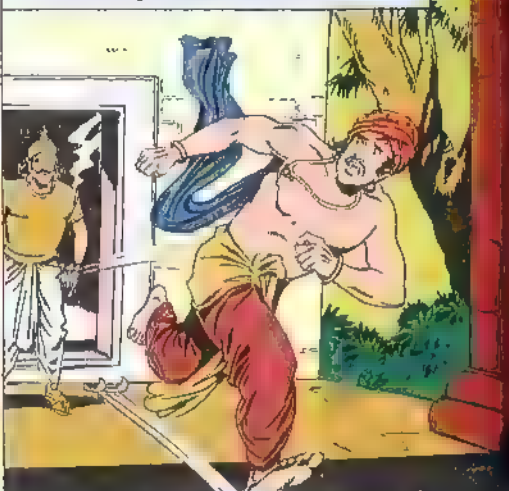


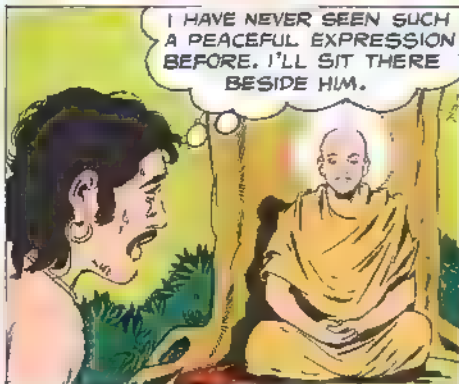
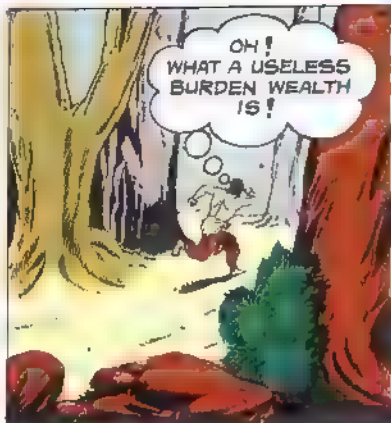


THE KING WAS AS STARTLED BY HIS DISCOVERY AS KESARI WAS AT BEING CAUGHT.



KESARI WAS THE FIRST TO RECOVER.



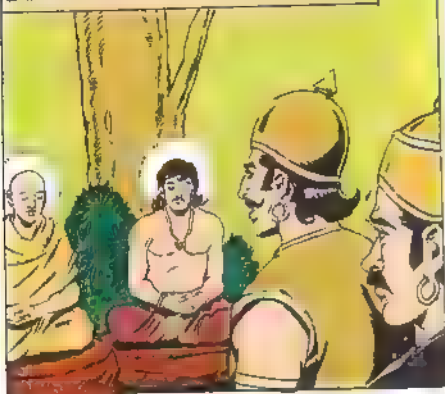


THE KING'S MEN MEANWHILE HAD  
JOINED HIM AND ALL OF THEM  
CAME IN PURSUIT OF KESARI.





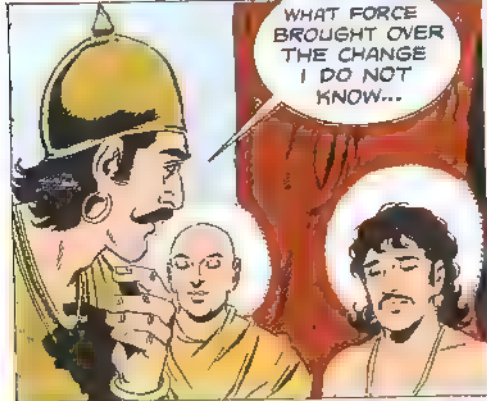
BUT WHEN HE CAME NEARER...



...THE KING WHO HAD COME TO CAPTURE WAS HIMSELF CAPTURED.



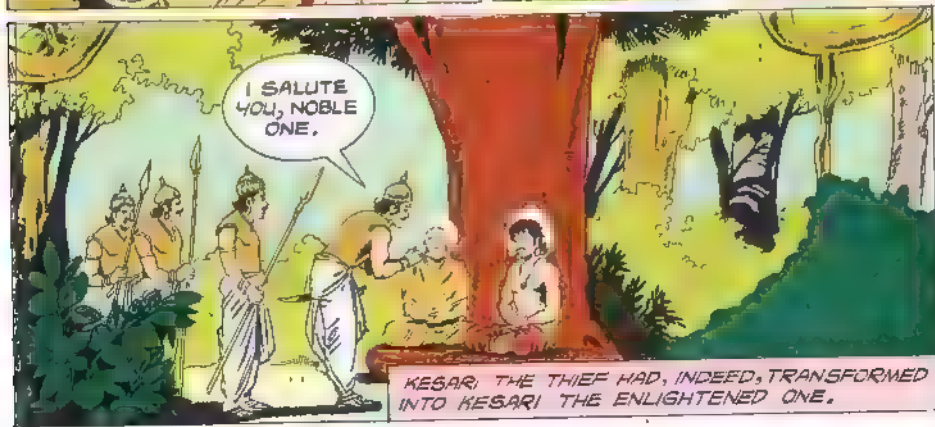
NO! THIS IS NOT THE KESARI I SET OUT TO CATCH. FORGIVE ME, O ENLIGHTENED ONE.



WHAT FORCE BROUGHT OVER THE CHANGE I DO NOT KNOW...



...BUT I DO KNOW THAT I AM IN THE PRESENCE OF A MAN WHO HAS FOUND PEACE.



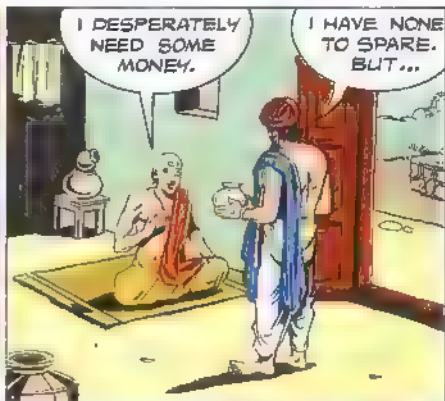
I SALUTE YOU, NOBLE ONE.

KESARI, THE THIEF HAD, INDEED, TRANSFORMED INTO KESARI THE ENLIGHTENED ONE.

# VASUDEVA



VASUDEVA CAME TO MEET HIS FRIEND IN THE CITY OF SHRIPURA TO ASK HIM FOR A LOAN.



I DESPERATELY NEED SOME MONEY.

I HAVE NONE TO SPARE. BUT...



...OUR KING GIVES TWO GOLD COINS TO THE FIRST BRAHMANA HE MEETS IN THE MORNING.

TWO GOLD COINS!

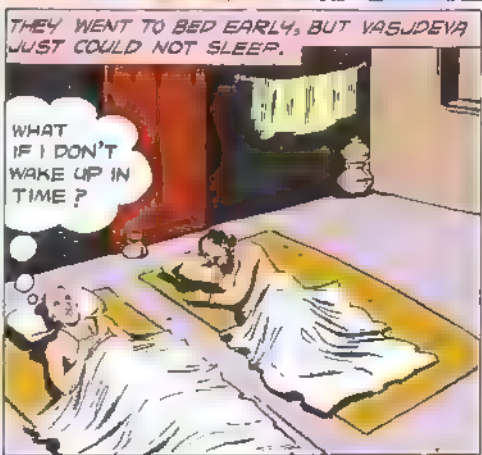


WHY, THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT I NEED!



I'LL SPEND THE NIGHT HERE AND GO TO THE PALACE A LITTLE BEFORE DAWN.

THEN WE'D BETTER GO TO BED EARLY.



THEY WENT TO BED EARLY, BUT VASUDEVA JUST COULD NOT SLEEP.

WHAT IF I DON'T WAKE UP IN TIME?



WHAT IF ANOTHER  
BRAHMANA GETS  
THERE BEFORE I DO  
AND RECEIVES  
THE MONEY?

ZZZ...



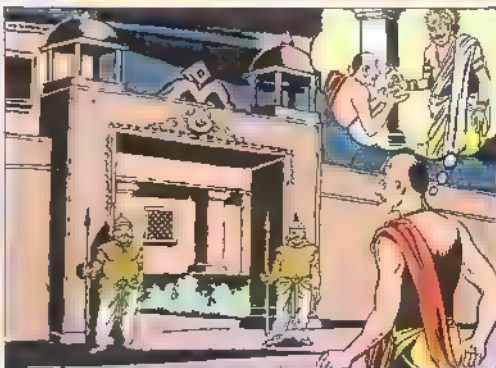
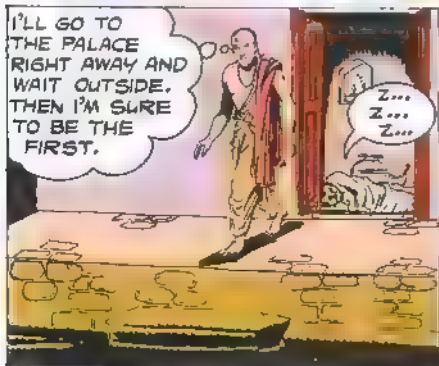
THE BEST THING  
WOULD BE NOT  
TO SLEEP AT  
ALL!

ZZZ...



I'LL GO TO  
THE PALACE  
RIGHT AWAY AND  
WAIT OUTSIDE.  
THEN I'M SURE  
TO BE THE  
FIRST.

Zzz  
Zzz  
Zzz



SUDDENLY—

DON'T TRY TO  
STRUGGLE!

HEY!  
WHAT...



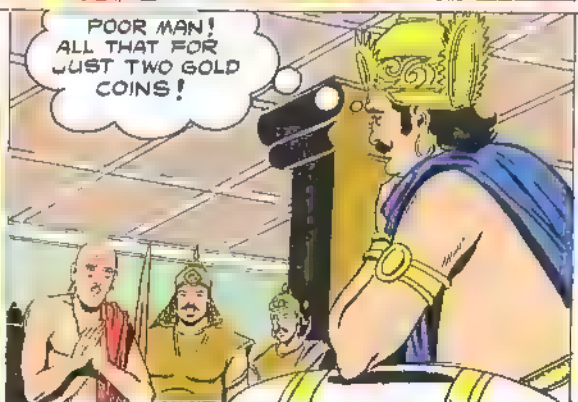
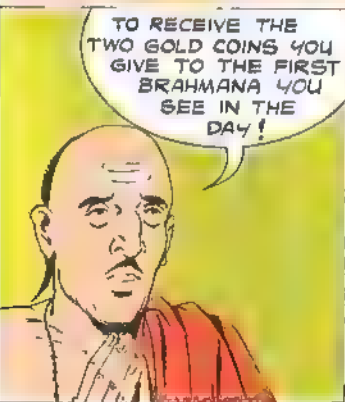
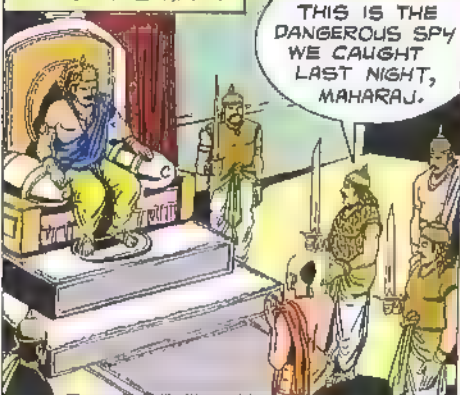
LET ME  
GO!

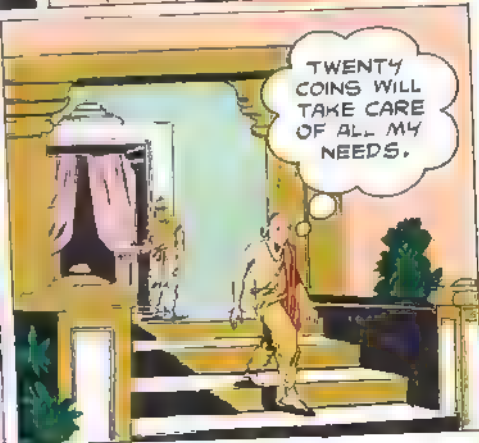
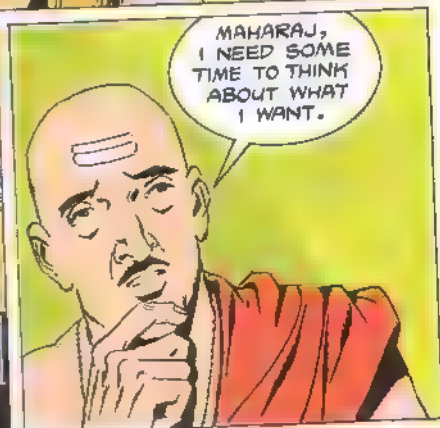
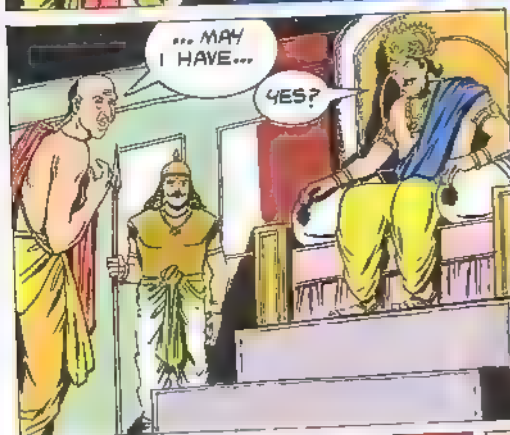




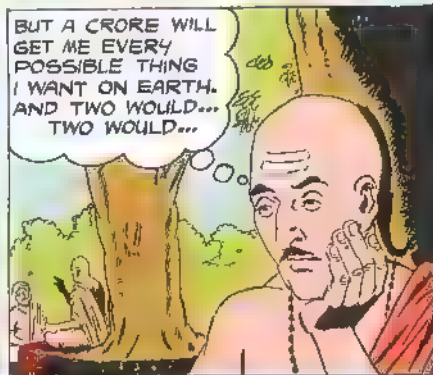
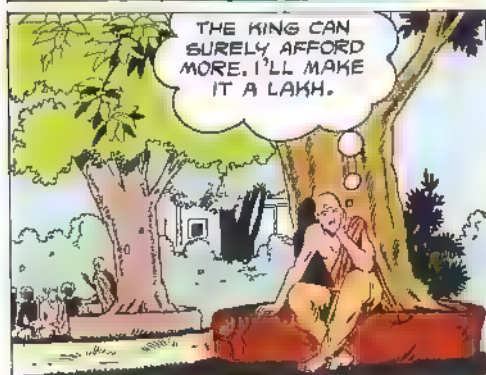


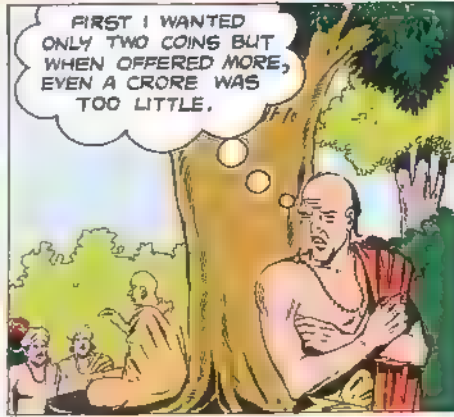
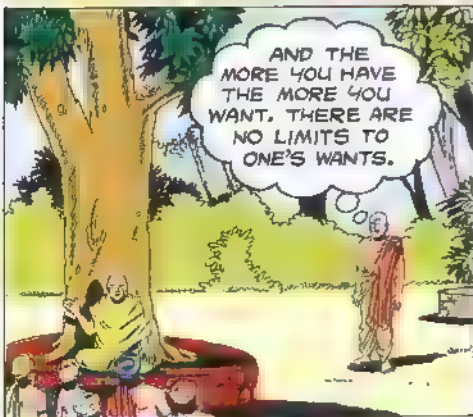
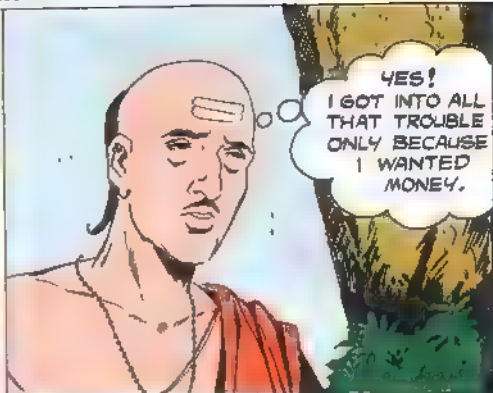
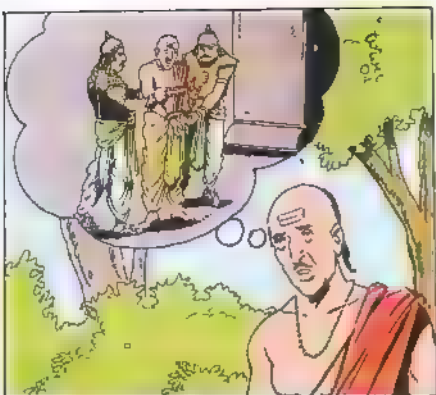
THE NEXT MORNING HE WAS BROUGHT BEFORE THE KING.













WHEN VASUDEVA RETURNED TO THE PALACE —

WELL, MY GOOD MAN? HAVE YOU DECIDED WHAT YOU WANT?

YES, MAHARAJ. NOTHING.

NOTHING?

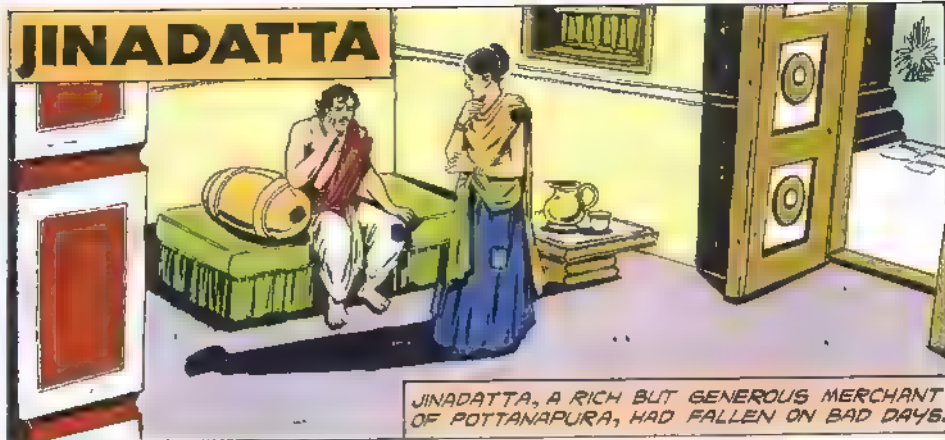
YES. I WANTED MONEY BECAUSE I WAS UNHAPPY WITHOUT IT.

BUT I HAVE REALISED THAT WITH IT I WOULD BE EVEN UNHAPPIER.

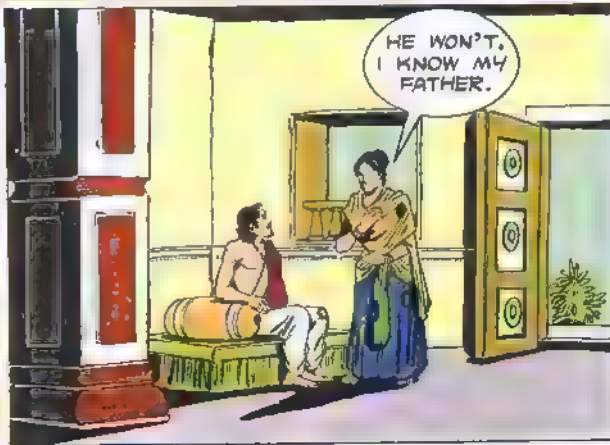
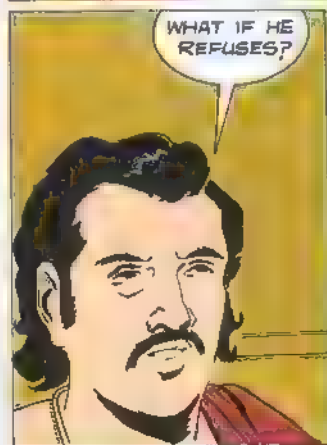
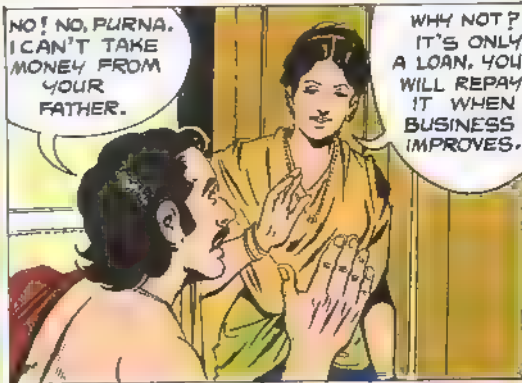
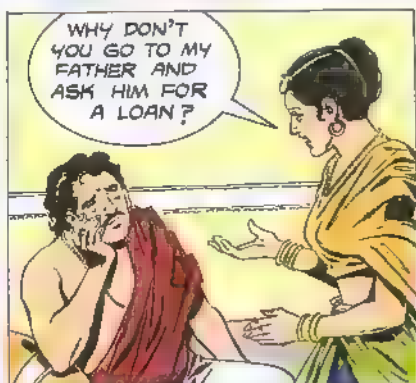
IN FACT, HAPPIEST IS HE WHO DOES NOT WANT ANYTHING.

AND I BLESS YOU FOR GIVING ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN THIS TRUTH.

# JINADATTA



JINADATTA, A RICH BUT GENEROUS MERCHANT OF POTTANAPURA, HAD FALLEN ON BAD DAYS.





IF YOU ARE SO CONFIDENT... WELL... ALL RIGHT... I'LL GO.

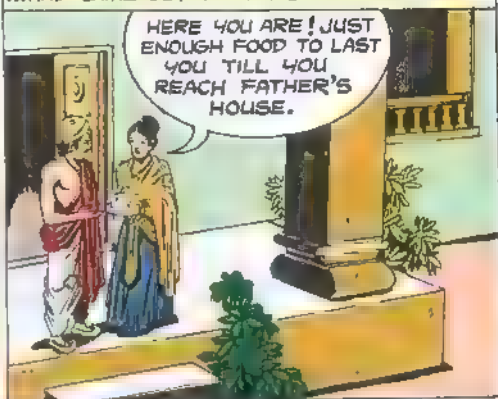
YOU MUST GO TODAY! I'LL GET SOME FOOD READY FOR THE JOURNEY.



PURNA WENT INTO THE KITCHEN...

...AND CAME OUT WITH A SMALL PACKET.

HERE YOU ARE! JUST ENOUGH FOOD TO LAST YOU TILL YOU REACH FATHER'S HOUSE.

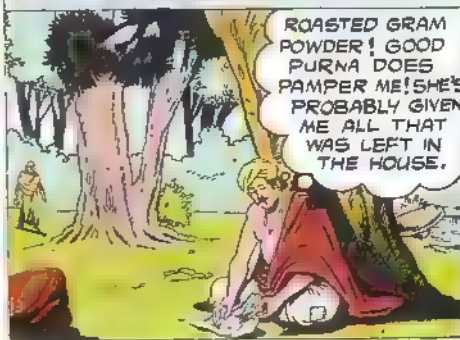


AND SO JINADATTA SET OUT.



TOWARDS NOON HE SAT UNDER A TREE BY A TANK AND OPENED HIS LUNCH PACKET.

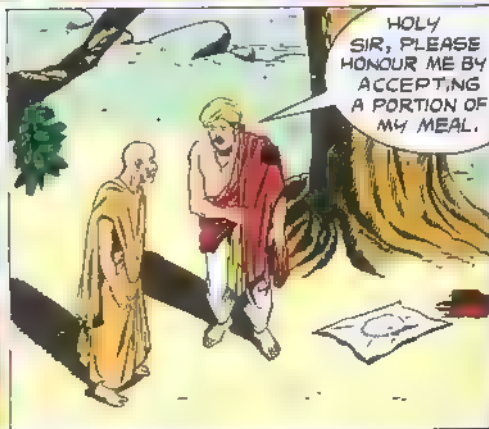
ROASTED GRAM POWDER! GOOD PURNA DOES PAMPER ME! SHE'S PROBABLY GIVEN ME ALL THAT WAS LEFT IN THE HOUSE.



A MONK! HOW LEAN AND FEEBLE HE LOOKS. HE MUST HAVE BEEN FASTING.



HOLY SIR, PLEASE HONOUR ME BY ACCEPTING A PORTION OF MY MEAL.



THE MONK ACCEPTED AND THE TWO  
SHARED THE MEAGRE MEAL.

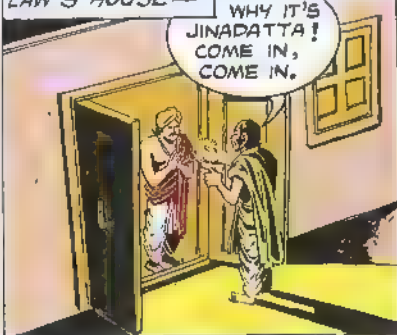


WHEN THEY FINISHED...

... THE MONK WENT HIS WAY AND  
JINADATTA CONTINUED HIS JOURNEY.



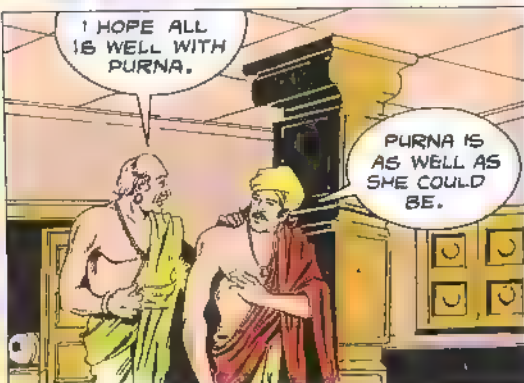
WHEN HE REACHED HIS FATHER-IN-  
LAW'S HOUSE —



WHY IT'S  
JINADATTA!  
COME IN,  
COME IN.

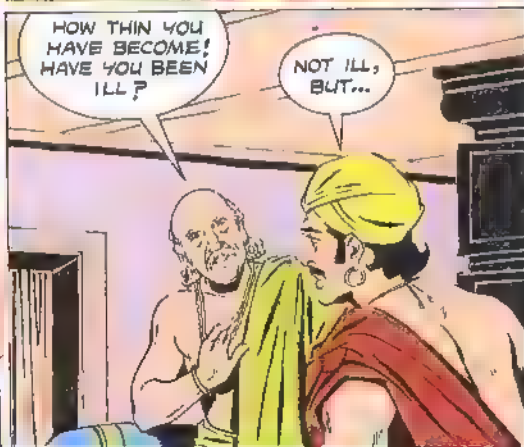


BUT YOU SEEM TO  
HAVE FALLEN ON BAD  
DAYS. THESE SHABBY  
CLOTHES...



I HOPE ALL  
IS WELL WITH  
PURNA.

PURNA IS  
AS WELL AS  
SHE COULD  
BE.



HOW THIN YOU  
HAVE BECOME!  
HAVE YOU BEEN  
ILL?

NOT ILL,  
BUT...





BUT  
WHAT?

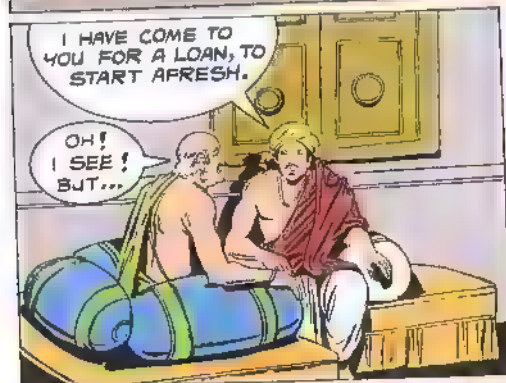
I HAVE  
HAD A SPATE OF  
BAD LUCK IN  
BUSINESS.



HM-M! JUST AS  
I SUSPECTED.

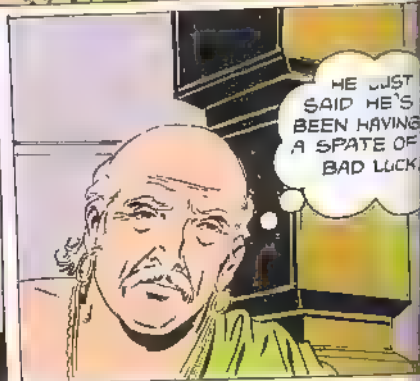


WE  
HAVE LOST  
EVERYTHING  
BUT THE  
HOUSE.

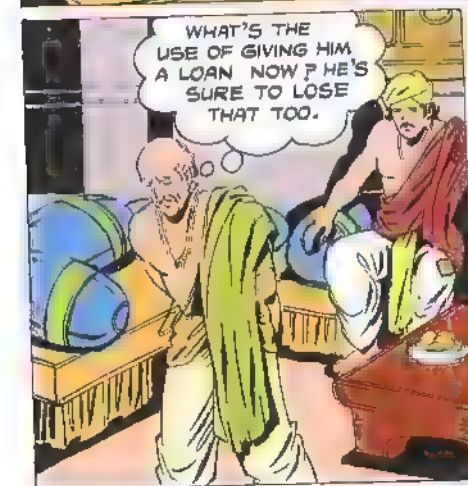


I HAVE COME TO  
YOU FOR A LOAN, TO  
START AFRESH.

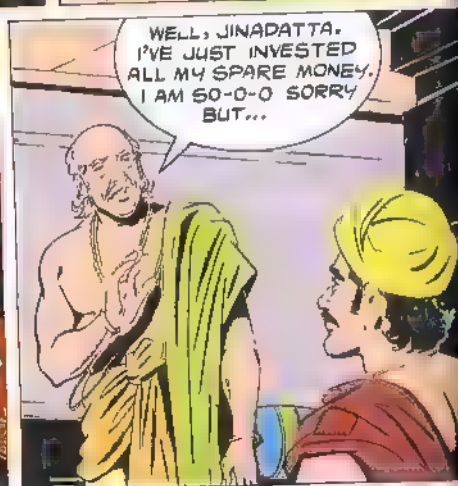
OH!  
I SEE!  
BUT...



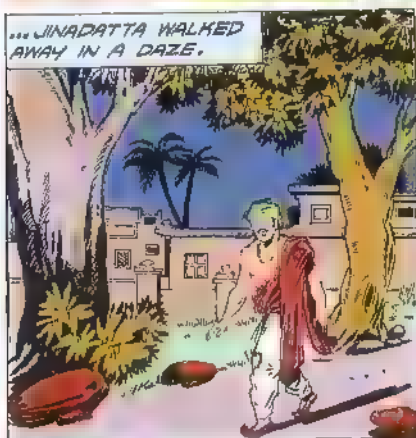
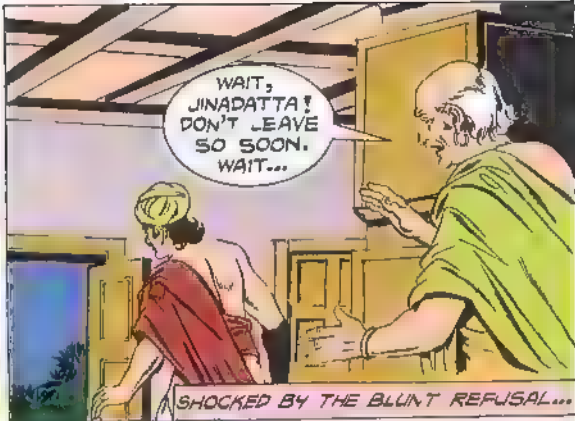
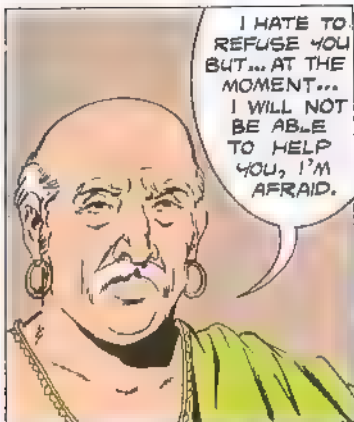
HE JUST  
SAID HE'S  
BEEN HAVING  
A SPATE OF  
BAD LUCK.



WHAT'S THE  
USE OF GIVING HIM  
A LOAN NOW? HE'S  
SURE TO LOSE  
THAT TOO.



WELL, JINADATTA.  
I'VE JUST INVESTED  
ALL MY SPARE MONEY.  
I AM SO-O-O SORRY  
BUT...







WHEN JINADATTA REACHED HOME —

OH! WHAT A BIG BUNDLE! I CAN SEE THAT FATHER HAS BEEN QUITE GENEROUS.



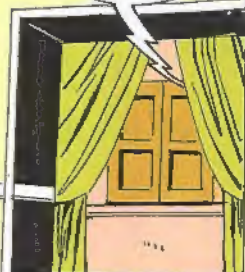
WHAT DID I TELL YOU? MY FATHER IS MORE GENEROUS THAN HE APPEARS.



FURNA, I'M GOING OUT FOR A WHILE AFTER I'VE WASHED AND CHANGED.



ALL RIGHT. BUT COME BACK SOON.



WHEN JINADATTA, WHO HAD GONE OUT TO PACIFY HIS CREDITORS, RETURNED —

WH— WHAT'S ALL THIS?

YOUR FAVOURITE DISHES!

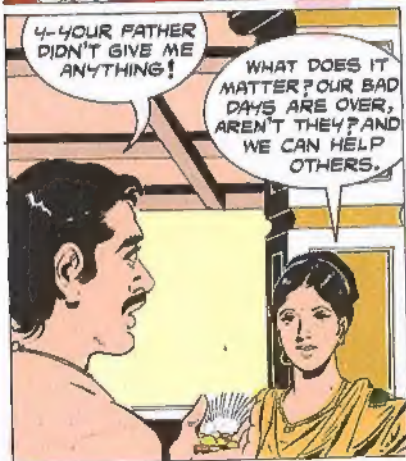
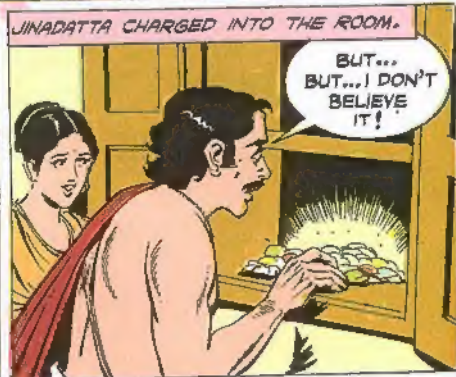


YOU KNOW WE ALREADY OWE THE GROCER A LOT OF MONEY. WHY DID YOU BORROW...

BORROW? WHY SHOULD I BORROW?







YES, UNINADATTA'S BAD DAYS WERE CERTAINLY OVER. NOW WHETHER IT WAS HIS GENEROSITY TO THE MONK OR HIS KIND HEART OR PURNA'S FAITH IN HER FATHER'S GOODNESS THAT TURNED MERE PEBBLES INTO PRECIOUS STONES, IS NOT KNOWN. BUT UNINADATTA NEVER AGAIN SAT TO A MEAL WITHOUT FIRST OFFERING SOME OF IT TO A MENDICANT.







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